cases have come to my notice of larval webs being taken without permission, and bred imagines released without reference either to the N.C.C. or the County Nature Conservation Trust. For example, a dozen or so butterflies found to the north of Evesham in 1983 were probably the result of such action, because the habitat was unsuitable and there is no *S. pratensis* in the area.

I still reflect on the origin of those butterflies which re-appeared in 1976. Had *aurinia* remained there for 23 years at low density and escaped detection until the good summers of 1973 and 1975 resulted in a build up of numbers? – or were they the consequence of a natural spread from an unknown nearby colony? – or did someone introduce them? We do not know, but we do have this excellent site for *aurinia* in Worcestershire today. Long may it continue! J. E. GREEN, 25 Knoll Lane, Poolbrook, Malvern, WR14 3JU.

DEATH'S HEAD HAWK: ACHERONTIA ATROPOS LINN. IN HAMPSHIRE – On 22 September 1984 two larvae of *atropos* were found in a small garden in Chilbottom, Hants. One was crawling down a garden path having been disturbed by the pulling of potato haulms. The other, much smaller, was feeding on unpulled potatoes. The larger larva, in its final instar, was bright yellow with light blue stripes, pupating on 26th September. The smaller larva, in its penultimate instar, was similarly coloured but moulted on 24th September to the rarer brown form with three bright white rings behind the head and a dark line down the centre of the back. It ceased feeding on 6th October, and went to ground.

The two large, healthy pupae were kept in the airing cupboard at about 70°C throughout the winter, but failed to emerge although they were very much alive. In May they were transferred to the kitchen – they wriggled energetically whenever light fell on them – and two fine males emerged on 20 June 1985. Although this species is known to diapause if kept in cool, frost free conditions, it is unusual to find such a prolonged pupal stage at elevated temperatures. Brig. E. L. SIMSON, 4 Plowden Park, Aston Rowant, Oxford.

DRAGONFLY EGGLAYING HABITS: AESHNA CYANEA (MÜLLER)– Males of many dragonfly species participate in egglaying, either actively as the leading partner of a tandem pair, or passively as a spectator, supervisor or protector of the female. Of some, however, the textbooks say that the female "oviposits unattended by the male". One such is *Aeshna cyanea* (Müller), but I suspect that this male also is more responsible.

Wanting photographs of this species, I frequented Savernake Forest ponds in late summer, 1963, but found the insects too active. Then, on the warm, sunny, late afternoon on 23 August, I again visited my favourite pond. My approach was halted by the